



Martin Luther King, Jr.

State Holiday Commission



1100 Chapline Street
Wheeling, WV 26003

T: 304-232-0511
F: 304-232-0513

August 4, 2015

Dear West Virginia Educator,

YWCA Wheeling is proud to announce the 2016 Project on Racism Essay Contest, also known as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest. The Project on Racism Essay Contest honors the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., while encouraging students' creativity through essay writing. The YWCA Wheeling is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

The 2016 Project on Racism Essay Contest will be based on the following quote from Dr. King's "A Realistic Look at the Question of Progress in the Area of Race Relations" delivered on April 10, 1957 at a St. Louis Freedom Rally:

No matter what we suffer. I know it's really hard when we think of the tragic midnight of injustice and oppression that we've had to live under so many years, but let us not become bitter. Let us never indulge in hate campaigns, for we can't solve the problem like that. Somebody must have sense in this world. And to hate for hate does nothing but intensify the existence of hate in the universe.

Students are invited to submit their entries on or before Friday, October 23. We hope you will consider incorporating the essay contest into your fall curriculum. Everyone who participates is a winner! Essay guidelines are also available at: www.minorityaffairs.wv.gov/MLKCommission/ESSAY_CONTEST

Sincerely,

Rita Gupta

Rita Gupta
CDCO Director

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2016 Project on Racism Essay Contest Guidelines

Eligibility

The 2016 Project on Racism Essay Contest is open to any student in grades 1—12 attending public, private, parochial, or home school in the State of West Virginia; or any student under the age of twenty enrolled in a high school correspondence/TASC program in the State of West Virginia.

The student does NOT have to be a U.S. citizen.

Contact Information Form

Please submit your Contact Information Form along with your essay. Use a paper clip to attach the Contact Information Form to the essay. Do NOT staple your Contact Information Form to your essay.

There is no separate registration form.

Essay Requirements

Essays should not include any information that identifies the student, teacher, principal, or school. Any essay that includes identifying information will be automatically disqualified.

All essays will be photocopied for judges. Any essay that is illegible after photocopying will be automatically disqualified.

Essays should be a maximum of five (5) pages.

Essays may be handwritten, typed, or computer-generated in 12-point Times New Roman font.

Essays must be in English.

Essays must be the original work of the student. Parents/teachers/guardians may type or write a student's work verbatim.

Each student may submit only one (1) essay.

Essays must be in black ink on white paper, double-spaced, and on one side of the paper only.

Please number pages at the bottom, i.e., 1 of 5, 2 of 5, etc.

Do not include drawings, references, or other attachments.

Do not use staples. Use a paper clip to attach the Contact Information Form and the essay.

Entry Submission

Entries may be submitted on or before October 23, 2015. Each entry must include both an essay and a Contact Information Form. You will NOT receive acknowledgement of receipt.

Essays and Contact Information Forms may be submitted via e-mail, fax, U.S. Postal Service, or hand delivery. YWCA Wheeling is not responsible for entries not received due to network service outages or delays, computer difficulties, or any other technological malfunctions; or for entries that are lost, stolen, misdirected, late, ineligible, incomplete, or mutilated by the U.S. Postal Service.

Submit each entry only one time. Do NOT fax an entry multiple times. Do NOT fax and mail the same entry.

All entries submitted via e-mail must be received by midnight on October 23, 2015. Please e-mail entries to CdcoDirector@ywcawheeling and type "Essay submission" in the subject line.

All entries submitted via fax must be received by midnight on October 23, 2015. Please fax entries to 304-232-0513 and write "Essay submission" as the recipient.

All entries submitted via U.S. Postal Service must be postmarked on or before October 23, 2015. Please mail entries to: YWCA Wheeling, 1100 Chapline St, Wheeling, WV 26003, ATTN: Essay submission

All entries submitted via hand delivery must be received by 5:00 pm on October 23, 2015. Please deliver entries to YWCA Wheeling first floor reception desk at the above address Monday through Friday, between 9:00 am – 5:00 pm.

Selection of Winners

Winners will be selected according to the following criteria: grammar, originality, relevance to theme, and effective expression. Winners will be announced at the beginning of December. All judgments are final.

Conditions

All submitted entries shall become the property of the YWCA Wheeling, and no submission will be acknowledged or returned. The copyright of the essay remains the exclusive property of the entrant.

If any submission commits plagiarism or violates copyright, the entrant is solely responsible for the act(s). The YWCA Wheeling is NOT responsible in cases of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement. If YWCA Wheeling receives any concrete evidence of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement after a winner is selected, then the prize shall be returned and YWCA Wheeling shall remove that work from its website.

If you have any questions about the 2016 Project on Racism Essay Contest, please contact us at 304-232-0511 or CdcoDirector@ywcawheeling.org

**2016 Project on Racism Essay Contest
Contact Information Form**

Essays may not include any information that identifies the student, teacher, principal, or school. Any essay that includes identifying information will be automatically disqualified.

STUDENT INFORMATION

NAME _____

GRADE _____ AGE _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

SCHOOL INFORMATION

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP CODE _____

COUNTY _____

PHONE _____

TEACHER _____ E-MAIL _____

PRINCIPAL _____ E-MAIL _____

2016 Project on Racism Essay Contest Topic

QUOTE

“No matter what we suffer. I know it’s really hard when we think of the tragic midnight of injustice and oppression that we’ve had to live under so many years, but let us not become bitter. Let us never indulge in hate campaigns, for we can’t solve the problem like that. Somebody must have sense in this world. And to hate for hate does nothing but intensify the existence of hate in the universe.”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Delivered April 10, 1957 at a St. Louis Freedom Rally

ESSAY TOPIC GRADES 1 – 4

What does “justice” mean? What does “injustice” mean? Describe one time when you experienced injustice.

ESSAY TOPIC GRADES 5 – 8

What does “justice” mean? What does “injustice” mean? What does “oppression” mean?

Describe one time when you experienced injustice or oppression. How did it feel? How did you react?

What advice do you have for someone in a similar situation?

ESSAY TOPIC GRADES 9 – 12 & TASC

What does “injustice” mean? What does “oppression” mean?

Describe one historical act or incident to which Dr. King might have been referring in the quote.

What motivates people to act in ways that are unjust and/or oppressive? What can be done to stop or minimize such acts?

Describe one time when you experienced injustice and/or oppression. How did it feel? How did you react?

What advice do you have for someone in a similar situation?

Scoring Sheet for Grades 1 – 4

Grammar: 20 points

Please count the number of grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors in the essay. Deduct one point for every error.

NOTE: If an error recurs CONSISTENTLY throughout the essay, then deduct only one point. If an error occurs once or multiple times throughout the essay, but NOT CONSISTENTLY, then deduct one point for each occurrence.

Errors	Points possible	Points received
	20	

Originality: 20 points

Please rate this essay on the originality of its ideas, choice of words, and style.

Topic	Points possible	Points received
What does “justice” mean?	5	
What does “injustice” mean?	5	
Describe one time when you experienced injustice.	10	
TOTAL	20	

Relevance to theme: 30 points

Please rate how well the content of the essay addresses the issues presented in the Topic.

Topic	Points possible	Points received
What does “justice” mean?	10	
What does “injustice” mean?	10	
Describe one time when you experienced injustice.	10	
TOTAL	30	

Effective expression: 30 points

Please rate how well the ideas in this essay are communicated, the overall organization of the essay, and the essay's overall presentation.

Topic	Points possible	Points received
What does “justice” mean?	10	
What does “injustice” mean?	10	
Describe one time when you experienced injustice.	10	
TOTAL	30	

Grammar: _____

Originality: _____

Relevance to theme: _____

Effective expression: _____

TOTAL: _____

Scoring Sheet for Grades 5 – 8

Grammar: 20 points

Please count the number of grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors in the essay. Deduct one point for every error.

NOTE: If an error recurs CONSISTENTLY throughout the essay, then deduct only one point. If an error occurs once or multiple times throughout the essay, but NOT CONSISTENTLY, then deduct one point for each occurrence.

Errors	Points possible	Points received
	20	

Originality: 20 points

Please rate this essay on the originality of its ideas, choice of words, and style.

Topic	Points possible	Points received
What does “justice” mean? What does “injustice” mean? What does “oppression” mean?	5	
Describe one time when you experienced injustice or oppression.	5	
How did it feel? How did you react?	5	
What advice do you have for someone in a similar situation?	5	
TOTAL	20	

Relevance to theme: 30 points

Please rate how well the content of the essay addresses the issues presented in the Topic.

Topic	Points possible	Points received
What does “justice” mean? What does “injustice” mean? What does “oppression” mean?	7	
Describe one time when you experienced injustice or oppression.	7	
How did it feel? How did you react?	8	
What advice do you have for someone in a similar situation?	8	
TOTAL	30	

Effective expression: 30 points

Please rate how well the ideas in this essay are communicated, the overall organization of the essay, and the essay's overall presentation.

Topic	Points possible	Points received
What does “justice” mean? What does “injustice” mean? What does “oppression” mean?	7	
Describe one time when you experienced injustice or oppression.	7	
How did it feel? How did you react?	8	
What advice do you have for someone in a similar situation?	8	
TOTAL	30	

Grammar: _____

Originality: _____

Relevance to theme: _____

Effective expression: _____

TOTAL: _____

Scoring Sheet for Grades 9 – 12 & TASC

Grammar: 20 points

Please count the number of grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors in the essay. Deduct one point for every error.

NOTE: If an error recurs **CONSISTENTLY** throughout the essay, then deduct only one point. If an error occurs once or multiple times throughout the essay, but **NOT CONSISTENTLY**, then deduct one point for each occurrence.

Errors	Points possible	Points received
	20	

Originality: 20 points

Please rate this essay on the originality of its ideas, choice of words, and style.

Topic	Points possible	Points received
What does “injustice” mean? What does “oppression” mean?	2	
Describe one historical act or incident to which Dr. King might have been referring in the quote.	3	
What motivates people to act in ways that are unjust and/or oppressive?	3	
What can be done to stop or minimize such acts?	3	
Describe one time when you experienced injustice and/or oppression.	3	
How did it feel? How did you react?	3	
What advice do you have for someone in a similar situation?	3	
TOTAL	20	

Relevance to theme: 30 points

Please rate how well the content of the essay addresses the issues presented in the Topic.

Topic	Points possible	Points received
What does “injustice” mean? What does “oppression” mean?	4	
Describe one historical act or incident to which Dr. King might have been referring in the quote.	4	
What motivates people to act in ways that are unjust and/or oppressive?	4	

What can be done to stop or minimize such acts?	4	
Describe one time when you experienced injustice and/or oppression.	4	
How did it feel? How did you react?	4	
What advice do you have for someone in a similar situation?	6	
TOTAL	30	

Effective expression: 30 points

Please rate how well the ideas in this essay are communicated, the overall organization of the essay, and the essay's overall presentation.

Topic	Points possible	Points received
What does "injustice" mean? What does "oppression" mean?	4	
Describe one historical act or incident to which Dr. King might have been referring in the quote.	4	
What motivates people to act in ways that are unjust and/or oppressive?	4	
What can be done to stop or minimize such acts?	4	
Describe one time when you experienced injustice and/or oppression.	4	
How did it feel? How did you react?	4	
What advice do you have for someone in a similar situation?	6	
TOTAL	30	

Grammar: _____

Originality: _____

Relevance to theme: _____

Effective expression: _____

TOTAL: _____

2016 Project on Racism Essay Contest Student Checklist

- ☐ Is your Contact Information Form filled out completely and accurately, and paper clipped to your essay?
- ☐ Did you EXCLUDE all identifying information (such as name, school, grade, age, and teacher) from your essay?
- ☐ Is your essay five (5) pages or shorter?
- ☐ Is your essay either handwritten, typed, or computer-generated in 12-point Times New Roman font?
- ☐ Is your essay legible after photocopying?
- ☐ Is your essay double-spaced?
- ☐ Is your essay on white paper?
- ☐ Does your essay answer each and every question in the Topic?
- ☐ Did you check for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation?
- ☐ Does your essay contain only your own original work?
- ☐ Are the pages numbered at the bottom, i.e., 1 of 5, 2 of 5, etc.?
- ☐ Did you exclude drawings, references, and other attachments?
- ☐ Did you exclude staples?
- ☐ Did you paper clip together the Contact Information Form and the essay?
- ☐ Is your entry being submitted on or before October 23, 2015?
- ☐ Are you submitting your essay only once?